

BRAZADAS BLAST

KEY ANNOUNCEMENTS

All swimmers are required to have a current USA Swimming membership to participate in practices and meets. This requirement applies to every swimmer on the team.

- Full Price Membership, [click here](#).
- Outreach Membership, [click here](#).

Thank you for taking care of this as soon as possible.

PRACTICE SCHEDULE

[Click here for practice schedule.](#)

Get all required practice gear at our [Brazadas FINIS Team Store](#).

The store is built specifically for our team, includes each group's required equipment, offers 30% off, and supports the club.

Practice Schedule Updates

- Monday, January 19: No practices (all groups) – *MLK Day*
- Tuesday & Thursday, January 20 & 22: Bronze & Silver added practices at regular times
- Friday, January 23: No PM practices (all groups) – *Zadas Distance Intrasquad Meet*
- Saturday, January 24: No practices (all groups) – *Zadas Sprint Intrasquad Meet*

👉 Please refer to the [January calendar](#) for full details.

High School Season Update (Begins Monday, January 26)

With the start of the high school swim season, Brazadas will again share the East Side Aquatic Center with multiple high schools. We have met several times with the Kern High School District this fall and winter to address ongoing scheduling conflicts and improve communication. While challenges remain, there has been positive progress in working together.

That said, there will still be occasional practice cancellations, primarily Fridays in April due to high school dual meets. When this happens, we plan to offer additional Saturday workouts.

Due to shared space, we will also have reduced lane availability, similar to what we experienced in early fall. Our late fall and winter schedule was designed to minimize major disruptions once the high school season begins.

The only schedule change starting Monday, January 26:

- Gold Group will start 15 minutes later
- New Gold practice time: 6:15 PM – 7:45 PM

After the conclusion of the club short course season, we will evaluate and adjust the practice schedule as needed.

COMPETITION NEWS & INFORMATION

[Click here for competition schedule](#)

Zada Distance & Sprints

- Jan 23-24 in Bakersfield, CA
- Meet information click [here](#).
- This meet is open to all Brazadas swimmers, email [Coach Jackson](#) to register
- Registration deadline: Sunday, January 18

BC Championships

- Jan 31- Feb 1 in Hanford, CA
- Meet information coming soon
- This meet is open to swimmers with BC time standards

DIRECTOR'S DESK

Dear Brazadas Families,

A Lesson That Lasts...

Back in February 2010, I flew home to Wisconsin to attend my high school swim team's 30-year anniversary. 30 athletes from each graduating class dating back to 1981 were invited to return, not just to celebrate the program, but more importantly to honor the coach who

founded both the high school team and the swim club and coached them every single year since.

Former athletes traveled in from Arkansas, Georgia, California, South Carolina, Wisconsin, Iowa, Minnesota, Illinois, Michigan, Missouri, and Oregon. To say it meant the world to our coach would be an understatement. Seeing his former student-athletes travel across the country just to be there for one weekend was powerful.

Our coach was deeply dedicated to his team. Yes, he taught us technique, training, and how to get faster, but that is not why we came back. He shaped who we became as people.

Every day, he reinforced core values: time management, discipline, responsibility, ethics, and respect. After every swim meet, our team walked the pool deck together and shook the hands of every timer, official, and volunteer, saying, “Thank you.” It was a simple gesture of appreciation for those who made the meet possible. Those lessons mattered.

Of course, our coach yelled and got mad. Once in a while, he may have even sworn. But when that happened, it was not his fault. It was ours. We had been lazy, disrespectful, irresponsible, or rude. I remember coming home upset at times and my parents asking, “What did you do?” The next day, I went back and apologized. Respect for your coach, teacher, or any adult was expected. We were not entitled to anything.

If you missed one practice, you dressed up for the next meet and watched. Dressing up meant dress pants, a button-down shirt, a tie, dress shoes, and non-white socks. If you missed a second practice, you were off the team. That was not unusual then, and it still is not in many places today.

For the record, I never missed a practice during my teenage years other than my grandfather’s funeral. During those same years, I was also involved in cross country, track, marching band, concert band, jazz band, the school musical, Boy Scouts, National Honor Society, math team, church, volunteered at the Badger State Games, and had a part-time job. You did not miss commitments. That was simply the expectation.

I could write endlessly about the lessons and memories, but what I really want to share is a letter our coach read to us at the beginning of every season. I still think about it often, especially as I watch today’s youth grow up.

Excerpt paraphrased from the trade journal *Steel*
By Donald E. Wood, 1960s

Dear Kid,

Today you asked me for a job. From the way you walked out, I suspect you have been turned down before, and maybe you have started to believe kids out of high school cannot find work.

But I hired a teenager today. You saw him. He was sitting in the reception area with polished shoes and a necktie. You may have thought he was a nerd. What made him special was not experience, because neither of you had any. It was his attitude.

He wanted the job badly enough to clean himself up, comb his hair, and find out what this company actually does. He tried to impress me. That is where he edged you out.

People who hire people do not always think the way you do. We have old-fashioned ideas about who owes whom a living. That may make us outdated, but the checks we sign still cash. If you want one, you need to tune in to our way of thinking.

Ever hear of empathy? It is seeing the employer's side of things. I could not care less that you are behind on your car payment. What I need is someone who will work for me like they would work for themselves.

The only time jobs grew on trees was when most of the workforce was wearing military uniforms. For the rest of history, you have had to get a job the same way you get a date. Read the situation, show up prepared, and act interested.

Jobs may not be plentiful, and they may not be glamorous. Many of us remember skilled craftsmen walking the streets during hard economic times. Compared to that, you do not yet know the meaning of the word scarce.

All around you, employers are looking for young men and women who are willing to go after a job in the old-fashioned way. When they find one, they cannot wait to hand them responsibility.

For both our sakes, lose the "being cool" act and get eager.

Donald E. Wood

Mr. Wood wrote this letter to a young man in an effort to shake him out of an attitude that was holding him back. Some of the original wording was intentionally strong and uncomfortable, but it was written because he cared enough to try to make a difference. Deep down, he wanted that young man to succeed.

I am sharing this story and letter with our Brazadas families because the values behind it are the same ones we strive to teach every day on deck. Swimming is about more than times, meets, and medals. It is about learning responsibility, respect, accountability, and

how to show up prepared and committed. Those lessons last far beyond the pool, and they matter just as much as anything we teach between the lane lines.

Go Brazadas,
Craig

Office Hours & Contact:

Our regular office hours are Monday–Friday, 1–3 p.m. at East Side Aquatic Center. But you're welcome to call or email anytime or request a meeting at another time.

To meet with the Director or Head Coach, email [Craig](#) or [Jackson](#). If we miss your call at 661-456-8401, please leave a message. We return emails and calls within 24 hours on weekdays (except meet days).

Team Resources:

Team Member Handbook and Brazadas Blast archive available on the [Resources Page](#). The Blast is sent every Tuesday, miss one? Find it in the archive.